Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 BOGOTA 01630 211813Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 SNM-05 SSO-00 /033 W
----------108736 211824Z /47
O R 211720Z FEB 78 ZFF-6
FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 6463
INFM USMISSION GENEVA IMMEDIATE
DEA WASHDC
WHITE HOUSE

S E C R E T BOGOTA 1630

FOR ARA AND S/NM

WHITE HOUSE FOR BOURNE

DEA FOR BENSINGER

GENEVA FOR MATHEA FALCO

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SNAR, CO
SUBJ: LEAK OF NARCOTICS INFORMATION

REFS: A. STATE 042525 B. BOGOTA 1538 C. BOGOTA 1493

1. I HAD LUNCH WITH THE MINISTER OF DEFENSE AND HIS AIDE AT THE RESIDENCE. HE ACCEPTED WITH ALACRITY THE CONCEPT OF INCREASED COOPERATION ON THE PART OF THE MINISTRY IN NARCOTICS INTERDICTION EFFORTS. WE AGREED THAT EMBASSY PERSONNEL WOULD MEET WITH THIS GENERAL STAFF IN ORDER TO MAKE PLANS.

2. HE WANTS ONE THING, OF COURSE, AND THAT IS TO CLEAR HIS NAME. HE IS NOT PARTICULARLY CONCERNED ABOUT THE ELECTIONS OR THE POTENTIAL EFFECT OF THE NARCOTICS LEAK ON THE ELECTION

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PROCESS. HE ALSO APPEEARS INDIFFERENT TO THE OUTCOME OF THE ELECTIONS. HE WENT ON AT SOME LENGTH ON HIS ASSO-

CIATION WITH U.S. MILITARY INSTITUTIONS AND APPEARED GENUINELY TERRIFIED AT THE THOUGHT OF BEING ON SOME SORT OF U.S. BLACKLIST HE PROTESTED HIS INNOCENCE AT SOME LENGTH AND SAID IT WAS UNJUST TO HOLD HIM PERSONALLY

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LIABLE FOR THE INDISCRETIONS OR WRONGDOINGS OF SUBORDINATES
IN THE MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT. HE REFERRED SPECIFICALLY
TO THE CHARACTER REFERENCE GIVEN BY COL. EFRAIN MARTINEZ TO
NORBERTO MORENO IN THE NARCOTICS TRIAL IN POPAYAN. HE
COMPARED THIS WITH A HYPOTHETICAL CASE IN WHICH SOME MINOR
EMBASSY FUNCTIONARY MIGHT DO SOMETHING SIMILAR. HE WAS
SURE I WOULD NOT BE HELD SIMILARLY ACCOUNTABLE.

3. THE MINISTER STATED THAT HE WAS PRESENTLY CONSTRAINED
FROM DEFENDING HIMSELF SINCE HE WAS BOUND TO RESPECT THE
CLASSIFIED NATURE OF OUR REPORT DESPITE WHAT HE MIGHT THINK
OF IT. HE WAS SHOWN THE PORTION OF THE DOCUMENT PERTAINING
TO HIM BY THE PRESIDENT AND HE WAS REQUIRED TO RESPECT THAT
CONFIDENCE. HE HAD CONSIDERED ASKING THERRY MALLINIAK, THE
LE MONDE CORRESPONDENT WHO WROTE THE ORIGINAL STORY, TO
PUBLISH THE WHOLE STORY OF HIS ALLEGED INVOLVEMENT SO THAT
HE COULD DISCLOSE THE RESULTS OF HIS INVESTIGATION WHICH
PROVED THAT THE CHARACTER REFERENCE HAD BEEN SIGNED BY A

SUBORDINATE OFFICER AND NOT BY HIMSELF PERSONALLY. MALLINAK,
HOWEVER, WAS PRESENTLY IN BOLIVIA AND, UNDERSTANDABLY,
APPEARED RELUCTANT TO RETURN ALTHOUGH HE HAD SENT
ASSURANCES THAT THERE WOULD BE NO RETALIATION.

4. THE MINISTER PROPOSED A SCENARIO WHEREBY HE WOULD
WRITE ME A LETTER ASKING WHAT WE HAD ON HIM. MY REPLY
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COULD PARAPHRASE THE CONTENTS OF THE ORIGINAL REPORT
WITH REFERENCE TO HIM, SAYING THAT THIS WAS ONE OF
MANY PIECES OF UNANALYZED INTELLIGENCE THAT HAD BEEN
EXCHANGED WITH THE COLOMBIAN GOVERNMENT. THIS WOULD THEN
PERMIT HIM TO RESPOND WITH THE RESULTS OF HIS INVESTIGATION.
THIS SCENARIO, HE ADDED,COULD BE ORCHESTRATED JOINTLY
AND TINKERED WITH AS WE WISHED. HE WAS NOT CONCERNED
WITH THE TIMING AND SAID THAT SUCH AN EXCHANGE COULD TAKE
PLACE AFTER THE FEBRUARY 26 ELECTIONS.

5. RECOMMENDATION: I THINK IT IS A CHEAP PRICE TO PAY
FOR ENHANCED COOPERATION WITH THE MILITARY IN THE NARCOTICS
PROGRAM. FURTHER, I BELIEVE THAT IN THIS SPECIFIC INSTANCE,
THE MINISTER IS CORRECT AND OUT INTELLIGENCE WAS FAULTY.
IF APPROVED, THE EXCHANGE SHOULD OCCUR AFTER THE ELECTIONS
TO TEST WHETHER PRESIDENTLOPEZ' THESIS IS CORRECT THAT
THE PERPETRATORS OF THE LEAK HOLD MORE THAN HAS ALREADY
BEEN PUBLISHED. FOR MAXIMUM EFFECT, HOWEVER, OUR ASSENT
IF ANY SHOULD BE PROMPT. I DEFER TO WASHINGTON. PLEASE
ADVISE.
ASENCIO

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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